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California's Natural Wildlands Legacy

Eastern Sierra

Bureau of Land Management
California

On the east side of the Sierra Nevada Mountains lies the western fringe of the American Great Basin and the northern edge of the Mojave Desert. Cold in the winter and hot and dry in the summer, this desolate, yet fragile land holds abundant mysteries and beauty. The convergence of these three major bioregions has created a landscape of remarkable biodiversity with more than 35% of all native species found in California represented here. These lands have for millennia been home to plants and animals in complex communities, including mule deer, pronghorn antelope, and sage grouse; some, such as the endangered Sierra Nevada bighorn and Owens pupfish, along with more than 200 plants, are found nowhere else in the world.

Visitors to this region can experience a rugged landscape with wide open expanses of uncluttered land where solitude is the norm and facilities are rare, a place where visitors can still find the spirit of the "Old West." Volcanic landscapes and vaulted mountain ranges provide direct evidence of the geologic upheaval that formed this part of California, as do the soaring peak of Mt. Whitney and the unique rounded pinnacles of the Alabama Hills. The Pacific Crest Trail, accessed at Chimney Peak, reaches to the continent's highest vistas.

The Eastern Sierra is a key recreation destination for the rapidly expanding populations of southern California, with the local economy almost completely dependent on the outdoor tourism and recreation industry. With Native Americans comprising more than 20% of the local population, special emphasis is given to assure public land management enhances opportunities for the preservation of traditional, cultural and spiritual values.

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The Alabama Hills - A Movie History Landscape

The Alabama Hills form the backdrop for much of the early American western film history with more than 300 pictures filmed here. Today, visitors can wind through this maze of towering boulders, recreating scenes from their favorite movies including Gunga Din, How the West was Won, Rawhide, Lives of a Bengal Lancer, Riders of the Purple Sage, The Lone Ranger, Maverick, GI Jane, Star Trek V, and Tremors. The hills are especially popular for photography, horseback riding, hiking, nature study, camping, and remain a favorite location for commercial filming.

The Volcanic Tableland

This vast sloping tableland just north of Bishop is a rugged volcanic landscape. A unique set of desert springs has created a desert oasis at Fish Slough, one of the last remnants of historic alkali wetlands, an area that may be key to the survival of several endangered species. Scattered across the Tableland are prehistoric petroglyphs providing evidence of earlier inhabitants. On the edge of the Tableland, jumbled boulder fields are attracting technical climbers from throughout the world.

History and Habitat at Bodie

The ghost town of Bodie, managed in a state of "arrested decay" attracts more than 200,000 visitors each year. The surrounding rugged public lands keep the ghost town isolated and remote, preserving the "Bodie Experience," a place frozen in time. A place where searing heat, numbing cold, and an eerie stillness all help visitors imagine the rugged frontier life of the 1800s.

The Pacific Crest Trail

The Pacific Crest Trail, one of the first trails in the National Trails System, spans over 2,650 miles from Mexico to Canada. The trail provides hikers and equestrians with a view in the Golden State's rich geology, biodiversity, history, and culture. From the chaparral of southern California; through Joshua trees in the Mojave Desert; across the granite spine of the Sierra Nevada; and finally traversing the volcanic landscapes of the Cascades, the trail is a portal into one of the most ecologically diverse regions in the world.

"Not to have known... either the mountain or the desert is not to have known one's self."

Joseph Wood Krutch

Your lands....*Your legacy!*

The long history of movie making in the Alabama Hills continues today.

Four petroglyph sites are located east of Bishop, on the "Bishop Petroglyph Loop Tour", in Owens Valley Paiute territory.

The Inyo Mountain Wilderness Area rises to 11,000 feet at Keynot Peak. These mountains have maintained most of their pristine character because of the ruggedness of the terrain.

Goals of the Eastern Sierra

Caring for the last vestige of wild California through conservation, education, and partnerships. Preserving the integrity of the ecosystem including the ground aquifers that support wetlands. Protecting spectacular vistas, and historical and cultural treasures. Collaborating with local communities to nurture sustainable tourism/recreation based economies.

Partnerships

Coalition for Unified Recreation in the Eastern Sierra

Mono County Collaborative Management Team

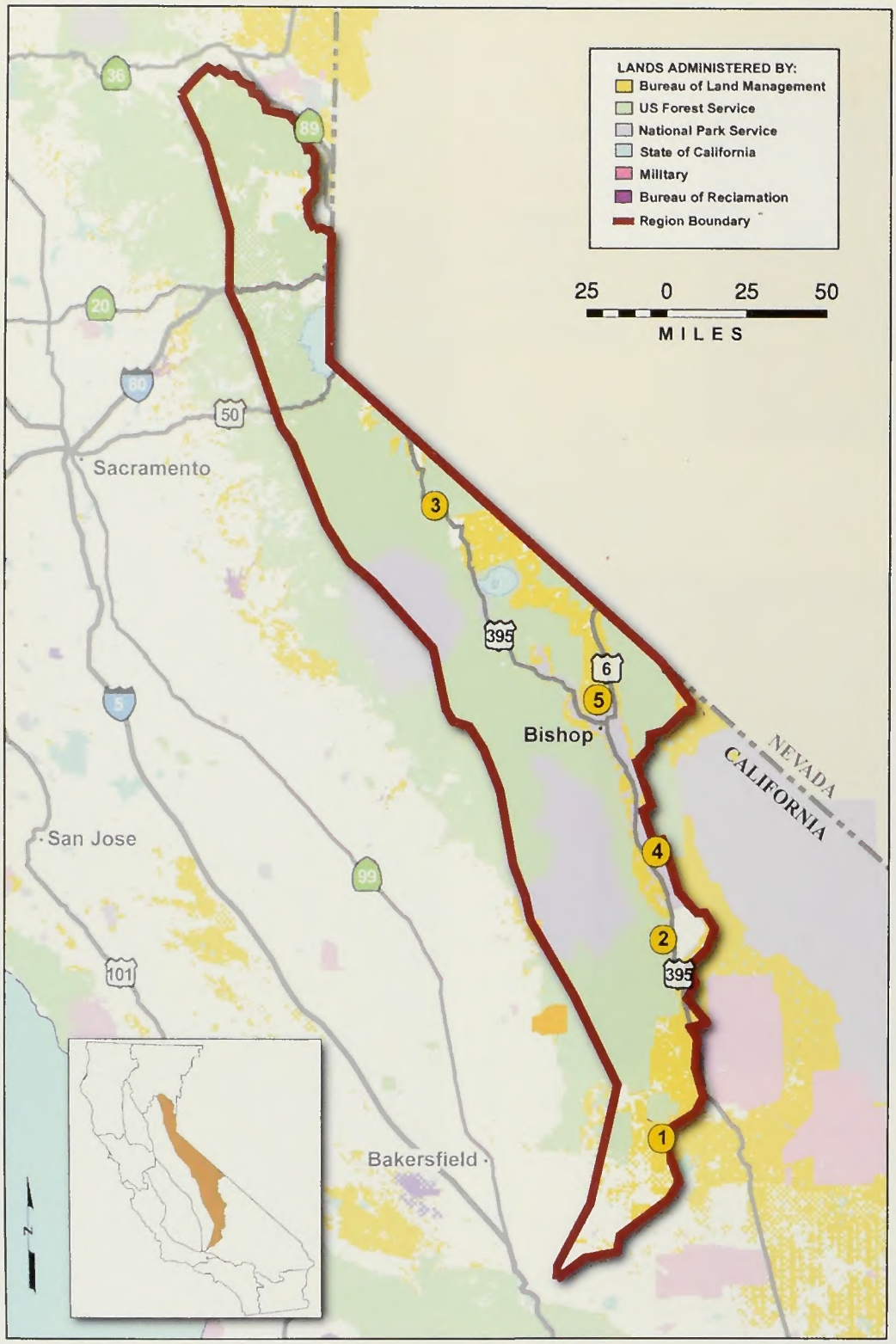
Audubon Society

Access Fund

Point Reyes Bird Observatory

Key Assets of the Eastern Sierra

- Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail
- Inyo Wilderness
- Alabama Hills
- Tungsten Hills
- Lower Rock Creek Trail
- Volcanic Tablelands
- Bodie Hills



1. Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail
2. Alabama Hills
3. Bodie Hills
4. Inyo Wilderness
5. Volcanic Tablelands

Eastern Sierra

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